

Ueberhorst. Horst and Wolfgang, Stump. *Freidrich Ludwig Jahn 1778/1978*. München: Heinz Moos Verlag, 1978, Pp. 120. Bibliographical notes, illustrations, index, German language publication. (English language publication also available).

Since the late 1950's the Heinz Moos Verlag has published small well illustrated books honoring the birth of great people in German and world history. Publications range from works celebrating such giants as Beethoven, Brecht, Gutenberg, Marx, and Adenauer. In 1978 this publishing company produced a pocket book (actual text—91 pages) celebrating the 200th anniversary of Freidrich Ludwig Jahn, one of the most controversial and debated figures in German history. The authors, Ueberhorst and Stump, are both highly qualified scholars of sport history. Ueberhorst, in 1975 a visiting professor at the University of Massachussets, is particularly well known to sport historians in North America. His previous studies of the Turner movement (*Zurück zu Jahn-Gab es kein besseres Vörrwants-Universitätsverlag* Bochum, 1969) and (*Edmund Neuendorff Turnführer ins Dritte Reich-Bartels und Wernitz Verlag*, 1970) make him an obvious choice for a work of this nature.

*Freidrich Ludwig Jahn 1778/1978* is written in such a way that it will satisfy both the scholar of sport history and the casual reader of political history. Typical of German scholarship the quality of research is excellent. The amount of detail (in a book this small) is nothing short of astonishing. Yet the wealth of information in no way slows the flow of the text. In addition, to help

clarify the sequence of events, a calendar is included which sets Jahn's life and the activities of the Turner movement alongside those of German and world history. Major personalities and events are well illustrated throughout.

Partly because of the subject matter the text is full of action and vitality. Jahn, as the initiator of the Turner movement is not idealized in any way. On the contrary, he is shown to be a complex, often narrow-minded personality, with fanatic drive and energy. Strongest amongst his ideals was his intense patriotism, and his desire to develop among his followers a vigorous and aggressive form of nationalism. The para-military activities that he conducted on the Hasenheide were predominately a political weapon and an excellent means of generating national fervour. For Jahn "Turnen" never stood alone or was pursued solely for the sake of pleasure and enjoyment. Indeed to separate "Turnen" from politics would have been considered by him as sheer nonsense. On the basis of their political involvement the Turners were in essence a political party and their physical activities a unique part of their political platform—one which showed great adaptability for developing discipline and unity of purpose.

This reviewer was struck by the similarity between much of Jahn's philosophy and that of the National Socialists. Consequently it is easy to understand why the Turners were so easily absorbed into the Nazi Party, and similarly, that the Party had little difficulty in twisting Jahnish nationalism into a philosophy which combined both nationalism and racism.

Throughout *Friedrich Ludwig Jahn 1778/1978* one is continuously impressed by the strength and missionary zeal of the Turners. In a span of some 150 years the Turner movement now has representation throughout the world. Its influence has been felt in almost every European country, in many cases generating bitterness and opposition from the supporters of other programs, such as Swedish gymnastics and the Czech Sokol movement. There is also an excellent discussion of the activities of the Turners who settled in North America. Among the more interesting minutia are portraits of Turner companies who fought in the Union Army during the Civil War and of those who formed a bodyguard for Abraham Lincoln at his inauguration in 1861. The authors trace the activities of the Turners through to the present day noting that they are now less politically active but still strongly unified. As an indication of their present strength it is worth noting that 50,000 Turners celebrated the 21st German Turnfestival in Hannover in 1978 with representatives attending from all over the world.

As with other works by these authors there is much to praise and little worthy of full-blooded criticism. If *Friedrich Ludwig Jahn 1778/1978* had been written solely for the scholar of sport history, one could argue that the introduc-

tory chapter was unnecessary. Here a short social history is given of physical education from pre-classic times; through to the end of the 18th century. But it is obvious that the book is intended for a much wider audience and on this basis such a review is worthwhile. Other than this small point *Freidrich Ludwig Jahn 1778/1978* is to be thoroughly recommended.

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